

~~SECRET~~

The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

NIC #01478--88

22 April 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director for Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH: National Intelligence Officer for Warning

FROM: Walter L. Barrows
National Intelligence Officer for Africa

SUBJECT: Warning and Forecast Report: Sub-Saharan Africa (U)

1. Intelligence Community representatives discussed Ethiopia, chemical warfare, Sudan, and Ivory Coast at the monthly warning meeting on 19 April. There was consensus on the following warning notes [redacted]

25X1

2. Warning Notes:

- Continuing strong insurgent pressure in northern Ethiopia probably will delay the government's planned counteroffensive for several months. Meanwhile, the fighting and the government's hardline stance on foreign famine relief operations will lead to serious starvation and spur population movements to neighboring Sudan. We have not yet detected plotting by disaffected military personnel against President Mengistu but he has personally intervened to discipline and redirect his demoralized troops and cannot indefinitely evade responsibility for the course of the fighting. Further serious government setbacks would put Mengistu in jeopardy; were army leaders to conclude that he "lost" Eritrea, they probably would move against him. (see paragraph 4)
- There is a "medium likelihood" that Libya will use lethal chemical weapons in Chad. If so, the West may never learn of it because the locale is remote and the evidence perishable. (paragraph 5)
- Emergency food deliveries in southern Sudan will become even more difficult soon as seasonal rains begin to wash away the roads. (paragraph 6)

CL BY SIGNER
DECL OADR
DERIVED FROM MULTIPLE

~~SECRET~~

25X1

SECRET

25X1

25X1

DISCUSSION

4. Ethiopia. CIA/ALA began the discussion by recounting recent insurgent gains in Eritrea and Tigray Provinces.

- Surprised government forces have adopted a defensive posture in the north while beginning to bring in forces from the Ogaden and elsewhere. Needing all available troops to confront the rebels, the Ethiopian government has negotiated with Somalia to ease tensions along their common border, stepped up recruitment, and recalled army veterans. The Soviet Union has loaned about 15 more air transports and offered more advisers. Addis Ababa almost certainly is apprehensive about army morale and discipline.

SECRET

25X1

SECRET

25X1

-- Alarmed at the Ethiopian government's demand that all foreign relief workers leave the north, US officials appealed to Moscow to persuade Mengistu to rescind the order. However, the Soviet preliminary response has offered no encouragement. Nonetheless, a few UN officials have been allowed to remain, so UN trucks will continue to move food and UN officials will try to ensure that Ethiopian officials do not deny food to those they suspect of sympathizing with the rebels. Meanwhile, we still do not see the expected major population movements to Sudan, probably because both Khartoum and the Ethiopian insurgents are opposed to them.

-- Several representatives voiced additional warnings. [] noted that Ethiopian army regulars--rather than conscripts or militia--have suffered most of the recent casualties. This adds to the likelihood that army discipline and morale may deteriorate in the weeks ahead. [] noted that Ethiopia has asked Sudan to restrain the EPLF, but that Mengistu probably has an inflated expectation of Khartoum's influence with the rebels. Finally, Ethiopia might ask Cuba for more troops, possibly to replace Ethiopian troops in the Ogaden now needed in the north. Cuba could have difficulty complying, however, because it has sent several thousand more troops recently to Angola, and President Castro seems preoccupied with that situation.

5. Chemical Warfare. CIA/OSWR provided a detailed review of the allegations, evidence, and prospects for chemical warfare in Africa.

- Libya- [] - has acquired a chemical warfare capability. Tripoli has a factory that produces chemical weapons and possibly biological agents. It apparently tried at least once to use chemical weapons against the Chadians, but the effort reportedly failed and killed Libyans instead. Libyan troops are not properly trained or equipped to employ chemical weapons. Although any use is risky, the Libyan forces still might try. One option might be to lay barriers of mustard agent which last one month or more. Chadian troops are ill-prepared to counter chemical warfare.
- Ethiopia probably has used fuel-air explosives in Eritrea, and we expect it to use riot control gas and napalm. Less than 10 percent of Ethiopian troops have protective gear, and Eritreans are improvising with goggles and charcoal-filled tubes for breathing--which can be effective. We have no evidence that Ethiopia possesses a chemical warfare capability, and it would run counter to Soviet practice for Moscow to provide it to a client.
- Sudan has some napalm and riot control agents, which it may use against the southern insurgents. Neither the army nor the SPLA rebels have provided more than 2 or 3 percent of their personnel with protective gear.

SECRET

25X1

SECRET

- We have recorded about 600 allegations, mainly in the press, of chemical weapons use in Angola since 1978 but cannot document any of them. Until about 1984, most accounts accused South Africa of using chemicals against Angolan government troops and also to poison food and water. The claims were plausible because South Africa had been the second-leading producer of chemical weapons among the Western allies during World War II. Pretoria has used herbicides to clear a strip along the northern Namibian border, and it has a pesticide plant capable of producing tons of chemical agents daily. Cuba thus sent a laboratory to test samples found in Angola, but most turned out to be white phosphorus. Since about 1984, Pretoria and the UNITA insurgents have been accusing Luanda and its allies of using chemical warfare. Pretoria helped a Belgian investigator to go to Angola, but his claimed evidence seems specious. Nevertheless, South Africa has begun to equip its troops with protective gear, and its public statements claiming that the Soviets have used chemical warfare in Angola probably are meant to "reserve the right" for Pretoria to retaliate in kind.

6. Sudan. CIA/NESA led the discussion of the extent of famine in southern Sudan.

- We know little about the scale of starvation in the countryside, but one indicator is reported population movements to Juba, Khartoum, southern Darfur and Kordofan Provinces, and to Ethiopia. The severely malnourished arrivals are dying at rates varying among the different camps from 2 to 8 per 10,000 people each day. Moreover, meningitis reportedly has broken out, and vaccinations so far have been limited to Khartoum. While conditions worsen, the UN has pulled its personnel out of the southern city of Juba because of the heightened insurgent threat.
- The rebel movement has agreed to cooperate with the International Red Cross in delivering food, but the government in Khartoum continues to drag its feet.

7. Ivory Coast. State/INR led the discussion of political stability in the Ivory Coast.

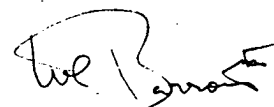
- President Houphouet-Boigny has not lost control and, despite his age, probably will remain in power at least until his current term expires in 1990. Constitutional provisions for selecting a successor probably would be followed if the President died in office, and all likely successors appear to be pro-Western moderates. Moreover, Ivory Coast has a history of stability, with an apolitical military and relatively little ethnic tension.

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

-- Nonetheless, there probably is some substance to recent reports of plotting among army officers, and ethnic tensions could grow to infect the military. The worst possible situation probably would be a prolonged incapacitation of Houphouet coupled with a marked economic downturn. There are no constitutional provisions for replacing a disabled president, and economic problems already include a shrinking GNP, an insufficient IMF package of assistance, and a growing need to reduce government salaries. Under the worst-case scenario, the inevitable jockeying for power by aspirants to the Presidency against a backdrop of economic grievances could turn violent.



Walter L. Barrows

SECRET

25X1